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Root, Elihu

The spirit of American nationality

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The Spirit of American Nationality

Speech by Elihu Root, at Carnegie Hall, New York City, on October fifth, nineteen hundred and sixteen

Issued by the
Republican National Committee

The people of the United States have some serious business to be done by their Government in the next four years and the way in which it is done will be of vital importance to the country and to all of us in the country. Foreign affairs and domestic affairs alike will be critical and difficult and safety and honor require that these affairs shall be handled upon sound principles of action, with intelligence, resolution and skill. The great self-governing people are trying to determine now whom they will employ for this business. Shall we engage Mr. Wilson, Mr. Bryan, Mr. McAdoo, Mr. Daniels and the rest of the Democratic Administration and a Democratic Congress to manage our affairs for the next four years?

In considering that question common sense asks "What are the principles by which these gentlemen regulate their conduct in office; with what firmness of character, good sense, and efficiency, have they applied their principles to the practical affairs of the country?

We are told that Mr. Wilson has kept the country out of war. So has every president for seventy years except Lincoln and McKinley. Never since Columbus sighted San Salvador has there been a time when it has been so easy for America to keep out of war by doing nothing as it has been during the great conflict now raging in the old world. All the great powers of the world except ourselves have had their hands full with existing enemies. They have been straining every resource to the utmost to avoid being conquered by the enemies already in arms against them. For each

one of them supplies of material and money and moral support from the United States have been earnestly desired and sought because these would be a help in the war now raging. No country has been willing to assume hostile relations with us because that would have the effect of weakening her and strengthening her present enemies. More than that, none of the countries at war has been willing to incur our passive hostility and throw to her active enemies the benefits of our material and moral support, free from the limitations imposed by the law of neutrality. Our danger is not now, while the great war is raging, but later, when peace has been made and the great armies are free and rulers and governments look about for ways to repair their losses and the great spaces and ill defended wealth of the new world loom large on the horizon of their desires. Then will come the pressure of competition backed by force. Then will come the grasping for opportunity, for trade advantage, for territorial foothold, in these new continents where the wealth of the world is concentrating while the old nations are fighting. Then will come the dangers of aggression, small at first, upon plausible pretext, but involving our rights, and then we must maintain our rights or abandon them. Then must be determined whether the Monroe Doctrine has behind it the sincerity and courage of a great nation or is to be surrendered as an idle boast. The North gave up Mason and Slidell because during our Civil War we could not afford to help the South by fighting England, and our government looked on passively while the Republic of Mexico was overturned and the Empire of Maximilian established in its place because we could not afford to help the South by a war with France. But when the war was ended and the armies of Grant and Sherman were free, Sheridan was sent to the border, and before the potentiality of that great army, Louis Napoleon withdrew from Mexico and began that downward course of diminishing

prestige and respect which ended on the battlefield of Sedan. When the old, warring world shall have had its Appomattox and the powers are set free each to pursue its own purposes, the time will come when America will need wisdom and character and power to maintain her peace and at the same time to maintain her rights.

Peace is not maintained by the surrender of just rights, for the presumption of impunity begotten of weak submission to aggression breeds further and still further aggression until at last a humiliated and outraged people plunges into war, which ought to have been wholly unnecessary. Peace is maintained by the assertion of just rights, calmly, dispassionately, reasonably, accompanied by a knowledge of power behind the assertion and a conviction in the minds of others that there is behind the power, courage and resolution certain to use the power if need be in defense of the right. The actual use of physical power may carry on a war, may win a war, but the certainty that known power will be exercised if need be gives to power its full weight in the preservation of rights without war. That conviction and certainty which make power potent for the peaceful preservation of right is a matter of character. It depends upon the world's experience and judgment of the character of a people and its government and of a people as shown through its government. That judgment upon us and our government, if it is clear in our favor, will be our sure defence in the years to come, while if it is unfavorable, we shall surely suffer.

What will be the attitude in this respect of the nations who covet the wealth and opportunity of the new world when the great war is over if we return the Wilson Administration to power? Will they have a conviction that courage and resolution stand behind the assertion of our rights? Will they believe in the sincerity of our declarations, in the certainty that the great powers of this people

will be used to maintain their rights, and that our government has the wisdom and skill to use those powers effectively? There can be but one answer to this question. The Wilson Administration has had the opportunity to exhibit its character to the world and it has failed to carry conviction or to command respect. In three fields of major importance affecting international affairs—the three great subjects with which it has had to deal—it has shown itself to be irresolute, and incompetent, and that is the judgment of the world. Those three are the murder of our citizens on the *Lusitania*, the preparation of military and naval force for national defence, and the ghastly failure in Mexico.

It will be two years this coming winter since Germany gave formal notice of her intention to sink merchant vessels on the high seas without safeguarding the lives of innocent passengers. On the tenth of February, 1915, Mr. Wilson's Administration replied that if Germany destroyed American ships or killed American citizens in that way the Government of the United States would hold the German Government to a strict accountability for such acts and take any steps it might be necessary to take to safeguard American lives and property and to secure to American citizens the full enjoyment of their acknowledged rights on the high seas. The words used meant action. They gave notice to Germany that she would carry out her threat at her peril. They met the German threat by an American threat. They committed the Government of the United States clearly and unmistakably to the use of the nation's power for the protection of the lives and rights of American citizens on the high seas. Yet Germany paid no attention whatever to the threat. She executed her purpose. She crippled and sank American vessels. She destroyed American lives innocently and rightfully traveling on the high seas. Why did Germany pay no attention to the bold and weighty declarations of the American

Government? Because she was ready to fight the United States? No. Not for a moment. She ignored the words of the Government of the United States because upon her trained observation and estimate of the character of the men who controlled the American Government she judged that they had not the nerve, the courage, the resolution, the sincerity, to make their threat good. The Government of Germany judged rightly, as the sequel showed. Germany did what she had threatened to do, and the American Government failed to make good its words. The brave words of our Government about strict accountability were used on the tenth of February, 1915. On the twenty-eighth of March a German submarine torpedoed the passenger steamer *Falaba* and killed an innocent American citizen traveling in the exercise of his undoubted rights. On the twenty-eighth of April a German aeroplane attacked and crippled the American vessel *Cushing*. On the first of May a German submarine torpedoed and sank the American steamer *Gulflight* and killed several Americans traveling of right upon that American ship under the American flag. In the last days of April public notice was given in the American newspapers by the German Ambassador that the same acts for the prevention of which our Government had fruitlessly arrayed the power of the United States with threats of action were to be repeated upon a larger scale by the destruction of the *Lusitania*, then about to sail from America. Nothing was done about that. Nobody made him understand that if this renewed threat was carried out his passports would be handed to him. Nobody made the German Government understand that they could not safely do the thing which they had been told would be at their peril. Nobody made the German Government understand that they could not with impunity despise the power and flout the authority of the United States in its solemnly declared purpose to protect the lives of its citizens on the high seas. And

so the *Lusitania* was torpedoed and sunk and one hundred and eleven American citizens—men, women and children—whose lives the Government of the United States had solemnly declared it would protect, were slain, and more than eleven hundred other innocent non-combatant passengers were sent to their death in violation of the law of nations and the law of humanity. Still nothing was done. Immediately upon the shock of the *Lusitania* horror, while all the world waited, expectant, for the Government of this great country to make good its words by action, we were told and the world was told that America was too proud to fight, and nothing was done, and nothing has ever been done. No one has been held to accountability. A year and more later, after more sinking of passenger ships and drowning of American passengers, upon the President's declaration to Congress that if such things continued to be done he would be obliged to break off diplomatic relations, Germany suspended her practice of aggression. She may resume it tomorrow. Her statesmen are now discussing the resumption of it. She made no amends for the past and she made no binding promise for the future. No war was needed to protect our citizens. What we needed was a government with the strength of character to do one thing or the other. If our government did not mean to protect its citizens on the high seas it should have told them that they would not be protected and they could have kept out of danger. But our government told them they would be protected. If our government meant what it said when it declared it would protect its citizens it should have had the capacity to make Germany understand that it meant what it said and the *Lusitania* would never have been sunk. But it had not that capacity. It had not the character to make itself believed. From the universal judgment of the world upon that transaction there is no appeal, and if we return Mr. Wilson's Administration to office we shall be served in all the difficulties of

the future by agents discredited in advance—by agents whose every word is received with a suspicion of insincerity and weakness.

When the full meaning of the events which involved Europe in war became apparent, many Americans who saw that the same principles of action which made war in Europe might well in the future be applied on this side of the Atlantic, and, if applied, would require America to be ready to protect her independence and her safety by force of arms. Many Americans demanded that preparation be made against these new conditions which had arisen in the world. The Democratic party would have none of it. The President would have none of it. In his address to Congress on the eighth of December, 1914, he said: The subject "is not new. There is no new need to discuss it. We shall not alter our attitude toward it because some amongst us are nervous and excited." He said: "Let there be no misconception. The country has been misinformed. We have not been negligent of national defence." At that time, after four years of Democratic control of the appropriations of Congress, our navy had sunk to the fourth place among the navies of the world. Practically nothing had been done towards the construction of the few battleships authorized in 1913 and 1914. Our submarine and aerial services were practically non-existent. Our army was below its authorized strength and was not sufficient for the protection even of the Mexican border. In the preceding Congress the Democratic House had passed a bill for a sweeping reduction of the regular army. Fortunately that bill was stopped in the Senate. Mr. Wilson illustrated the attitude and spoke the sentiments of the Democratic party, which for generations had been always opposed to the army and to the navy, and not only to their enlargement but to their adequate maintenance. Something more than a year later Mr. Wilson made a tour of the country telling the people of the United States that the world was on fire and they

must hurry up to get ready to fight. He told his audiences that it was imperative to have the regular army greatly increased; that it was imperative to have a volunteer force provided for and trained. He told them the national guard wouldn't do; that it wasn't big enough; that it was under state control. He said at Milwaukee:

> "There are incalculable elements of trouble ahead which we cannot control or alter. I would be derelict to the duty which you have laid upon me if I did not tell you that it was absolutely necessary to carry out our principles in this matter now and at once."

He said at Saint Louis that we must have incalculably the greatest navy of the world. He said at Chicago:

> "A year ago it did seem as if America might rest secure without any great anxiety and take it for granted that she would not be drawn into this maelstrom. But a year ago was merely the beginning of the struggle. Another year has been added, and now no man can competently say whether the United States will be drawn into the struggle or not."

Yet, a year before that speech, five months had already elapsed since the Battle of the Marne. The lines of the great conflict were set and it was already known throughout the world that the struggle would be long and doubtful and terrible and well nigh universal. It might not be strange if a college professor, engrossed in the study of books and the instruction of youth, were not to take notice of facts so plain, but it is indeed strange that the President of the United States, with a great State Department at his hand, with ambassadors and ministers and consuls in every part of the earth, reporting by letter and by telegraph—in a position unequalled for information—in a position for which he was selected from among millions and invested with vast executive power under the special duty to exercise vigilance and foresight for his country's protection,

should be oblivious to the facts. At last, after more than a year, the President had learned that there was need to discuss the subject of military and naval preparation; that the country had not been misinformed; that he and his Administration and his party were negligent of national defence; and that the confident and satisfied declarations of his address to Congress on the eighth of December, 1914, were in error. A few months later, Secretary of War Garrison, who had shone as one of the few bright stars among the nebulous incompetencies of the Democratic Administration, resigned from the Cabinet because the President had shifted his ground again and given his support to the proposition which he had publicly denied, that no force beyond the regular army and the national guard was necessary for defence. I have detailed all this as the basis for a question, and I ask you, What kind of respect for the effective use and direction of our power will our competitors and rivals among the nations have, and what kind of safety for such a use and direction will we have if we return to office an administration which nearly two years after its inauguration was so densely and confidently ignorant of the conditions of the military and naval service of our country and whose foresight of the world conditions required a year and a quarter to mature?

Why is it that our whole available regular army and a large part of the national guard, many of them ordered away from their homes and their business to their great inconvenience and distress to meet an unexpected emergency, are now engaged in defending the states of Texas and New Mexico against Mexican attacks? How does it happen that on the 20th of June last, the Secretary of State of the United States, in a letter to the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Affairs, found it necessary to make the statements which I shall now read:

> "The Government of the United States has viewed with

deep concern and increasing disappointment the progress of the revolution in Mexico. Continuous bloodshed and disorders have marked its progress. For three years the Mexican Republic has been torn with civil strife; the lives of Americans and other aliens have been sacrificed; vast properties developed by American capital and enterprise have been destroyed or rendered non-productive; bandits have been permitted to roam at will through the territory contiguous to the United States and to seize, without punishment or without effective attempt at punishment, the property of Americans, while the lives of citizens of the United States who ventured to remain in Mexican territory or to return there to protect their interests have been taken, and in some cases barbarously taken, and the murderers have neither been apprehended nor brought to justice. It would be difficult to find in the annals of the history of Mexico conditions more deplorable than those which have existed there during these recent years of civil war.

"It would be tedious to recount instance after instance, outrage after outrage, atrocity after atrocity, to illustrate the true nature and extent of the widespread conditions of lawlessness and violence which have prevailed. During the past nine months in particular, the frontier of the United States along the lower Rio Grande has been thrown into a state of constant apprehension and turmoil because of frequent and sudden incursions into American territory and depredations and murders on American soil by Mexican banditts, who have taken the lives and destroyed the property of American citizens, sometimes carrying American citizens across the international boundary with the booty seized. American garrisons have been attacked at night,

American soldiers killed and their equipment and horses stolen; American ranches have been raided, property stolen and destroyed, and American trains wrecked and plundered. * * * So far has the indifference of the *de facto* Government to these atrocities gone that some of these leaders, as I am advised, have received not only the protection of that Government, but encouragement and aid as well."

These conditions are the result of three years and a half of Mr. Wilson's Mexican policy. They are the result of Mr. Wilson's interference in the internal affairs of Mexico. The men against whom our Secretary of State complained so bitterly are the men whom President Wilson put into control in Mexico by using the power of the United States to turn Huerta out and make their revolutionary movement successful.

When Mr. Taft retired from office in March, 1913, the Mexican revolution, through which Madero was overturned and Huerta became president, and the counter revolution, headed by Carranza and Villa, had been in progress only twelve days. The time was too short to determine any question of recognition or even to ascertain facts with certainty, and the whole subject was properly left by Mr. Taft to his successor. The new administration had a clear field to determine and act upon a policy of its own. The ordinary practice of nations under such circumstances is to await the decision of the people of the country itself in favor of one contending faction or the other and to recognize whichever actually acquired control of the territory and shows itself able to perform the duties of government. The general public declarations of President Wilson were in accordance with that rule of action, for he said to Congress on the twenty-seventh of August, 1913:

"We cannot in the circumstances be the partisans of either party to the contest that now distracts Mexico or constitute ourselves the virtual umpire between them."

And he proclaimed the policy of Watchful Waiting. In reviewing this policy at Indianapolis, on the ninth of January, 1915, Mr. Wilson said:

> "When some great dailies not very far from where I am temporarily residing thundered with rising scorn at watchful waiting, Woodrow sat back in his chair and chuckled, knowing that he laughs best who laughs last."

And speaking of the question who should be the governor and what the government of Mexico, he said:

> "It is none of my business and it is none of your business how long they take in determining it. It is none of my business, and it is none of yours, how they go about the business. The country is theirs. The government is theirs. The liberty, if they can get it, and Godspeed them in getting it, is theirs. And so far as my influence goes while I am President nobody shall interfere with them."

If the President had adhered to the policy which he thus publicly proclaimed the contrast might be less shocking now between the appalling conditions exposed in the letter of the Secretary of State which I have quoted and the untimely merriment of the Indianapolis speech. But the President's action did not conform to these declarations. His action and his words were startlingly inconsistent. He proclaimed watchful waiting and he engaged in active interference and partisanship. In that very month of August, 1913, when he told Congress that we could not be the partisans of either party to the contest in Mexico or constitute ourselves the virtual umpire between them he had already sent John Lind to Mexico with instruction, saying:

> "The Government of the United States does not feel at liberty any longer to stand inactively by while it becomes daily more and more evident that no real progress is being

> made towards the establishment of a government at the City of Mexico which the country will obey and respect."

Then followed a demand to be presented to General Huerta that there should be an immediate cessation of fighting; that security should be given for an early and free election; and that General Huerta should bind himself not to be a candidate for the presidency at that election. In other words, a demand that Huerta should surrender his power and get out. Of course Huerta refused. Curiously enough, bad as he may have been, he and his adherents resented the attempt of the President of the United States to determine the presidential succession in Mexico and exclude him from the office. His government was in possession of the City, the archives, the greater part of the territory of the Republic. It had been recognized by substantially all the great powers and most of the smaller powers of the world. He was discharging the international obligations of the Mexican Government. The bankers of the great financial cities of the world had loaned thirty million dollars to his government as the Government of Mexico, and he refused to abdicate. On the second of the following December, 1913, the President in a public address to Congress declared:

> "There can be no certain prospect of peace in America until General Huerta has surrendered his usurped authority in Mexico; until it is understood on all hands indeed that such pretended governments will not be countenanced or dealt with by the Government of the United States."

That declaration of course ruined the credit of Huerta's government in the money markets of the world. But Huerta still maintained himself, and on the ninth of the following April, 1914, occurred an incident which was made the occasion for further action on the part of the American Administration. On that day the crew of a boat from the United States steamship *Dolphin,* landing at a pier

in the City of Tampico, the use of which had been prohibited without their knowledge, were arrested by the subordinate officer in charge at the pier and detained an hour and a half until a superior officer was informed and ordered their release. The officer in command at Tampico apologized for what had been done; General Huerta apologized for what had been done; the subordinate officer who had made the arrest was himself arrested and held for punishment. But a formal salute to the flag was demanded as further reparation, and, that not being forthcoming, the President ordered the navy to Vera Cruz, the great seaport of Mexico through which the Capital is served, and captured and occupied the city. In that capture nineteen American marines were killed and seventy wounded and the Mexican loss was reported to be one hundred and twenty-six killed and one hundred and ninety-five wounded. At the same time the President applied to Congress for a resolution to justify his course. The resolution adopted by Congress, which was still under discussion when the news of the capture was received, was in these words:

> "That the President of the United States is justified in the employment of the armed forces of the United States to enforce the demands made upon Victoriano Huerta for unequivocal amends to the Government of the United States for affronts and indignities committed against this Government by General Huerta and his representatives."

In asking for this justification in his address to Congress of April 20, 1914, the day of the capture, the President said:

> "The people of Mexico are entitled to settle their own domestic affairs in their own way, and we sincerely desire to respect their right. The present situation need have none of the grave implications of interference if we deal with it promptly, firmly, and wisely."

Nevertheless, it was widely believed and widely charged at the time that the flag incident was but a pretext for interference in the civil war then waging in Mexico and for using the power of the United States to enable Carranza and Villa to overthrow Huerta. And many times the comment has been made that as soon as Huerta had been bottled up by the seizure of his seaport and the interruption of his supplies, the subject of saluting the flag was never heard from again. Proof has now been furnished that the charges made at the time were well founded; that the flag incident was a mere pretext; that the reason for action laid before Congress was not the real reason. That proof comes from President Wilson's own official family. It is a statement by Franklin P. Lane, Secretary of the Interior in President Wilson's Cabinet at the time the events occurred and holding the same position in President Wilson's Cabinet now. You can find Secretary Lane's statement in the Congressional Record for July 21, 1916, at page 13207. It is as follows:

> "Meanwhile the revolution had gained such headway in the north that it was difficult from day to day to say which had or occupied the greatest portion of Mexican territory. Huerta was keeping up his resistance because he was being supplied with ammunition from abroad. A ship was reported ready to land at Vera Cruz with a cargo of arms, and as a warning to Huerta and in proof of the seriousness of our purpose to bring Huerta to a recognition of our attitude, the order was given to seize the custom house and occupy the port of Vera Cruz.
>
> "We did not go to Vera Cruz to force Huerta to salute the flag. We did go there to show Mexico that we were in earnest in our demand that Huerta must go, and he went before our forces were withdrawn. * * * We had gone to Vera Cruz 'to serve mankind.' Our only quarrel was with Huerta, and Huerta got out on July 16, 1914."

And so, proclaiming impartiality and respect for the rights of Mexico to settle her own affairs, President Wilson interfered in the civil controversy in Mexico, and finally intervened by force of arms and destroyed one party and aided the other party and overthrew Huerta and set up Carranza and Villa in the control of government there. He has had his way in Mexico and he has managed it with such a degree of skill that both Villa and Carranza are our enemies; that no man in Mexico dares call himself our friend, and that the Secretary of State is constrained to write the letter which I have quoted. I wonder if the President laughed when he read that letter and contemplated the results of his extraordinary watchful waiting, modified by active interference?

The question for the American people now is, "Are they willing to have the serious and critical affairs in which their vital interest will be concerned during the next four years conducted in the same way that the Mexican business has been conducted?"

There is one particular subject with which the United States must deal in order to meet the revulsion in production and trade which will accompany the close of the great war. That is the Tariff. I think there is very general agreement upon that. When the demand for supplies to the armies in the field has ended great numbers of men will return to productive employment in Europe and great numbers of operatives will be thrown out of employment here and will have to find other work. Europe will have little money and be heavily in debt. She will be under strong compulsion to pay her debts by making and selling goods. She will be on a basis of strict economy and high organization and she can make and sell cheaply. The United States will have an abundance of money and vast purchasing power. Our market has always been attractive to European producers. It will be far more attractive after the war. It is highly probable that even England will resort

to a protective tariff, so that our production will meet protective barriers in all the foreign markets. What are we going to do then? We must do something. We must protect ourselves or we shall become the dumping ground of the world and our workmen will beg in the streets. Even the Democrats have seen that something must be done, for they have provided a tariff board to ascertain and report the true facts to which a tariff law is to be applied. When they made a tariff at the beginning of the Wilson Administration they were very contemptuous about tariff boards. They would have none of them. In Mr. Taft's Administration the Republicans provided for a tariff board to report to the President and it was appointed and doing excellent work. When the Democratic House elected in 1910 came in they starved it out of existence by refusing appropriations. In the last session of the 61st Congress the Republicans passed through both Houses a new bill for a tariff board to report to Congress. There were some slight differences of detail in the two Houses, which were agreed upon in conference, but the Democrats filibustered against the final conference report and so killed the bill. So the tariff board was dead—slain by the Democratic party. It has now been resurrected by that party because they see that something must be done about the tariff when the war closes. Even my friend Senator Stone of Missouri has seen the light about dye stuffs. Coming from Missouri he has been shown in some way that dye stuffs must be protected. He is still faithful to the old flag of tariff for revenue only, but he votes for a protective tariff on dye stuffs because he says he sees no other way to protect them. Now we can all understand that if the country wants a tariff for revenue only they may put the making of it in the hands of the Democratic party. But can any sane man contemplate that party making a protective tariff? In the first place they can't do it honestly. They don't believe in it. They were

born and bred in a different faith. Way back in 1856 the Democratic platform declared for "progressive free trade throughout the world," and four years later, in 1860, their platform contained this provision:

> "We, the Democracy of the Union, in convention assembled, hereby declare our affirmance of the resolutions unanimously adopted and declared as a platform of principles by the Democratic convention in Cincinnati in the year 1856, believing that Democratic principles are unchangeable in their nature when applied to the same subject matters."

Their principles are indeed unchangeable enough about the tariff to make it impossible for them to apply the principle of protection fairly and honestly to the making of a tariff. That opposition has run through all their history. In 1876 their platform says:

> "We demand that all custom house taxation shall be only for revenue."

In 1880 they declared for "a tariff for revenue only." In 1892 their platform says:

> "We declare it to be a fundamental principle of the Democratic party that the federal government has no constitutional power to impose and collect tariff duties, except for the purpose of revenue only."

In 1904 they say:

> "We denounce protectionism as a robbery of the many to enrich the few, and we favor a tariff limited to the needs of the government, economically, effectively, and constitutionally administered."

In 1912 they say again:

> "We declare it to be a fundamental principle of the Democratic party that the federal government under the constitution has no right or power to impose or collect tariff duties except for the purpose of revenue."

And in their platform of this present year they declare:

> "We reaffirm our belief in the doctrine of a tariff for the purpose of providing sufficient revenue for the operation of the government economically administered, and unreservedly indorse the Underwood Tariff Law as truly exemplifying that doctrine."

There is the position of the Democratic party. They have been crying so long that protection is an abuse of power and an abomination that they can't reconcile themselves to a protective tariff, and they regard the Underwood tariff as a model. That is what we are to have if the Democrats go back—the Underwood tariff still, with perhaps here and there a slight modification regarding dye stuffs and some other articles which can be shown to gentlemen from Missouri and elsewhere. Well, if there ever was a clumsy, ill conceived, misfit law, it is the tariff which bears Mr. Underwood's name. We had already discovered what its effect was when the war in Europe began. During the year ending June 30, 1914, under that tariff our imports of foreign products were $80,917,423 greater and our exports to foreign markets were $101,305,001 less than in the preceding year under the Republican tariff. So that American production during that year was diminished in its foreign market and superseded in its domestic market to the extent of over $182,000,000. At the same time the revenue from customs duties for the year 1914, with its eighty odd million of increased imports, fell short of the customs revenue of the preceding year by $26,132,740.77. Many mills and factories were closed or running but a part of the time. Great numbers of laborers were thrown out of employment and the market for American products was still further reduced by the destruction of their purchasing power. Enterprise halted, discouraged and apprehensive of the future. New enterprises were no longer attempted. Old plants were no longer en-

larged. The Underwood tariff had already failed when the war in Europe began. That war furnished and continues to furnish to American production the most absolute protection because it has to so great a degree stopped production in Europe. So long as the war lasts our producers have practically no competition in our home market, for Europe does not make the goods to sell here. At the same time, while the war lasts our producers have an enormous market in Europe for the things that Europe can't produce in sufficient quantities. When the war is over that condition will cease, and we shall deserve what happens to us if we do not provide against that time by a tariff quite different from the Underwood tariff and made by men who do not consider a tariff for revenue only an article of religious faith.

There is another grave matter which should influence the selection of a new government. That is the surrender of the President and Congress to the peremptory demand of the four railroad brotherhoods for the increase of their wages by a law passed under threats.

To say that the demand of the brotherhoods or the law passed in response to that demand involved the question of an eight-hour day for labor is a manifest subterfuge. There was no demand or suggestion that the labor of the engineers, firemen, conductors, and trainmen included in the four brotherhoods should be limited to eight hours a day. There was nothing in the law limiting their labor to eight hours a day. There was no penalty and no prohibition against exceeding that number of hours. Everybody knew that a strict eight-hour schedule of labor was inapplicable in fact to service upon railroad trains where speed and distance so largely control length of service, and nobody proposed to apply any such schedule to that business. What happened was that the brotherhoods demanded, not shorter hours of labor but that in computing their pay eight hours should be assumed as a day's work and they should have

the same pay for eight hours that they had been getting for ten, with extra pay for the additional time above eight hours. The railroad companies offered, in computing the pay, to assume eight hours as the basis but refused to allow the full ten hours' pay for eight hours' service, with extra pay for the additional time and they offered to arbitrate the question as to what amount of pay the brotherhood men ought to receive for their service on the eight-hour basis. The question thus became a question of the amount of pay pure and simple. The universal opinion of our country has been that such question ought to be settled by arbitration. Labor has been in favor of that. The most intelligent and broad-minded employers have been for that. Disinterested citizenship has been for that. Arbitration of industrial disputes has been gradually developing into a custom of the country, just as our system of law has developed through customs, answering the needs and enforced by the public opinion of the community. Where the participants in any industry are rendering a public service there is a special reason and a special necessity for such peaceable settlement of industrial disputes. In an ordinary business a strike is a contest between a laborer's need to earn a living and an employer's need to continue a profitable business. They only are directly involved. But where there is a public service the whole people are involved. If the service stops they suffer, and they have a right that no controversy between the employer and the employed shall stop a service necessary to the continuance of the life of the community. The only way yet discovered to prevent that is the settlement of such industrial disputes by arbitration. The brotherhoods refused arbitration and insisted upon the immediate granting of their demands, whereupon the President recommended the passage of a law granting their demands. A bill was introduced in Congress and while it was under discussion the brotherhoods gave notice to the govern-

ment and the people of the United States that unless the bill was passed by Saturday night they would stop the entire railroad transportation of the country. Under the compulsion of that threat the bill was passed by Saturday night and is on the statute books of the United States. No inquiry was made and there was no pretence of forming an opinion in Congress as to whether the demand was justified and the wages required ought to be paid. You and I don't know whether the demand was justified. The people of the United States don't know whether it was justified. Congress did not know whether it was justified. The legislation was passed in submission to a threat. The brotherhoods, four hundred thousand in number, had in their hands the power to injure the community by stopping transportation and the Government of the United States submitted to them. It was a holdup pure and simple. Don't for a moment think that this was merely a question between railroad corporations and the men who run their trains. It passed far beyond that. The railroad companies render an absolutely necessary public service. If it stops, business stops, and ruin and starvation begin. For this service they are allowed to charge freight rates and fares strictly regulated and limited according to law. Out of these receipts they have to pay for the labor they employ, for the supplies they purchase, interest upon the money they have to borrow, and, if possible, sufficient return to stockholders to keep the necessary capital invested in the business. Under the rates now fixed by the Interstate Commerce Commission the annual returns to the railroad capital of the country amount to less than four per cent. upon the amount of the stock and less than four per cent. upon the money actually invested. The railroad brotherhoods include only about one-fifth of the employes of the railroad companies. How about the other four-fifths? Are they not equally entitled? They are not so well paid as the brotherhood. The majority of the brotherhood are

already receiving greater compensation than the average of the clergymen, the teachers, the lawyers, the doctors, of the country. Why should not the other four-fifths hold up the government upon a demand for higher wages? They also are able to stop transportation. For all that the Government of the United States has ascertained or knows the four-fifths not included in this legislation ought to have their wages increased and the one-fifth ought not to have them increased. The difference is not of ascertained rights, but that the one-fifth has exercised the power of compulsion and the four-fifths have not.

But if the railroad rates now have been justly fixed by the Interstate Commerce Commission, upon these enormous increases of pay to their employes the rates must be increased and shippers and passengers must pay more and the whole public must pay more, for into the cost of practically every material thing that we use in life enters the cost of transportation. The higher the cost of transportation, the higher must be the price we pay. So, in the end, the public pays and the question is "Are the people of the United States to be held up by a compact, organized minority?" There is a broader question here than the payment of higher railroad rates. There is the question of the competency of government and the spirit of a self-governing people. If the government of this democracy is to submit to compulsion by an organized minority and the people are to approve that by their votes, other minorities will profit by the example. There are a multitude of ways in which the coercion of the community through its necessities is practicable if coercion be permitted. If the attitude of our government under the compulsion of the railroad brotherhoods is to be the attitude of the American people we hold our lives at the mercy of the public blackmailer. The peace and order and prosperous life of the community are im-

possible upon such conditions. The organization of civil society which regulates the rights and duties of its members towards each other upon the basis of ascertained justice will have failed as it has failed in Mexico. The only way to prevent the example of the surrender of government to the compulsion of the railroad brotherhoods from being followed by others is to condemn it and condemn it now. The way is to respond now to that evil example with so clear a note of the courage and independent character of American citizenship that never again will any band or organization or class of men attempt to extort money from the American people by threats of injury rather than by the established justice of their cause.

The conduct of life by individuals and of public affairs by political parties is not wholly or chiefly controlled by the events and impulses of the hour. Overruling all, the spirit of the man's life and the party's life determines the attitude and the action with which the exigencies of the successive years are met. The weakness of the Democratic party, and the legislators and executives by whom it is represented in the government of our country, is that the Democratic party is national only in form and profession. It does not think nationally. It does not feel nationally. Its acts are not inspired by the spirit of American nationality. During all its history it has been a party of confederated local interests, mainly solicitous to preserve and advance those interests by the exercise of such power as it could acquire in the National Government. It has been the party of strict construction of the constitution and opposition to the exercise of power by the National Government. It has been the party of state rights and jealousy of the power of the National Government. At every step of the expanding power of our nation it has played the part, not without occasioned usefulness, of objection and resistance;

of criticism and condemnation. It denied the right of the nation to make internal improvements. It denied the right of the nation to establish a national bank. It denied the right of the nation to restrict the expansion of slavery. It denied the right of the nation to prevent the secession of states. It denied the right of the nation to issue green-backs. It denied the right of the nation to maintain a protective tariff. Observe the language of the Democratic platform of four years ago:

> "We declare it to be a fundamental principle of the Democratic party that the federal government under the constitution has no right or power to impose or collect tariff duties except for the purpose of revenue."

The harsh experience of reconstruction imposed by national power upon the South, where the control of the Democratic party lies, and the inveterate habit of opposition to government acquired during the long years of Republican ascendency have preserved and emphasized the traditions and sentiments of the party's past. And now, as ever, the first thought, the first solicitude, the inspiring motives, are to be found in their state interests, their local interests, their neighborhood interests, while second to these and subordinate to them is their acceptance of the majestic conception of the nation.

When the Democratic Congress rejected Secretary Garrison's plan for a national citizen force to supplement the regular army and substituted for that the absurdly inadequate provision for bringing in the National Guard of the states, and when the President, abandoning his former position, went with the Democratic Congressmen, and the Secretary resigned, it was because the Democratic party clung to the local privilege of appointment of the officers of militia by the governors of their states and was unwill-

ing that the officers of the great national force upon which we must depend if war comes should be appointed by the national executive. That would have been impossible if the Democratic party had been inspired and actuated by the spirit of American nationality and had thought first of the competency and power of the nation in arms.

When Mr. Wilson and Mr. Bryan permitted their Mexican policy to be controlled by an enthusiasm, however generous, for the political fortunes of the Indians of Mexico and interfered in the internal affairs of that country for the purpose, as Mr. Wilson himself has told us, of giving the eighty per cent. "a look in" in the government of that country and turned a deaf ear to the forty thousand American citizens who were appealing in peril and distress for protection, they somehow failed not merely in judgment, not merely through being misinformed and deceived as to the true nature of the civil strife in Mexico and the men engaged in it, but they failed in the spirit of their work. The spirit that has made America great and free was not in them. Listen to the words of Secretary Evarts written to Minister Foster in Mexico thirty-eight years ago:

> "The first duty of a government is to protect life and property. This is a paramount obligation. For this governments are instituted, and governments neglecting or failing to perform it become worse than useless. * * * Protection in fact to American lives and property is the sole point upon which the United States are tenacious."

The imminent, deadly peril of the Americans in Mexico was not a mere question of property or of human life. It was a question of national duty and honor and right to existence, for

a nation that is indifferent to the oppression and destruction of its citizens anywhere on earth has already begun to die. The President was charged by his office and his oath to perform that duty for the nation which trusted him. But he forgot it. The oppressed and imperilled Americans were to him no more than were Mexican peons. He was indifferent to them. He recognized no duty towards them. And he interfered in the affairs of Mexico, not for their protection but in aid of what he supposed to be a movement for the redistribution of land and of political power among the people of Mexico. The Secretary of State has recorded the result in the letter from which I have quoted. The President is proud of this. He tells of it himself. How does it happen that a sentimental interest in an uplift movement in Mexico was stronger than the desire to perform the duty of our nation towards its citizens? It was because the spirit of American nationality—the spirit that has made America great and honored—was not in the President or his Secretary of State or the Democratic Congress which stood behind him. That is the fundamental reason why the brave words of the message to Germany before the *Lusitania* was sunk failed to bite into the consciousness of the German Government and prevent the outrage. That is the real reason why the arrogant demand of the railroad brotherhoods upon the Government of the United States, under threat of injury, was not resented and repelled and the whole force of this nation rallied in defence of its right to govern itself free from compulsion.

The terrible power of a great nation in earnest clears a way for itself and maintains rights and accomplishes just purposes with no need for physical force. But if the spirit is wanting, neither fine words nor skillful argument nor expansive sentiment can take its place.

The most precious possession of the American people is not in our cities and palaces, our railroads and factories, our rich mines and fertile farms, for we may have all these and lose our own soul. The supreme necessity of our life is the spirit that bore up our fathers in their poverty and struggles; the spirit that inspired them in the great empty spaces of the new world with the conception of a self-governing republic, bound together by the universal devotion of her sons, instinct with the high and unhesitating courage of liberty, honored for justice, leading the world towards the better things of freedom. The spirit is not gone. It has been sleeping. It has been overlaid by wealth and prosperity and ease. What America needs most of all now is that she may be revealed again in the hearts of her people; that they may realize their love of country; that their patriotism may be quickened; that they may be ready again to live for her honor and die for her duty as their fathers lived and died, and as millions of men are living and dying now for their countries on those sad battlefields of the old world.

I have lived a long life, and, please God, will die in the company and faith of the Republican party. I have not been blind to its faults or silent about them. But from away back among the dim impressions of childhood there come to me now and then the voices of women praying that God's infinite wisdom might save this nation for freedom through the trials of bleeding Kansas and Nebraska. Among the memories of half-comprehending and half-forgotten boyhood are the sounds of marching men and the strong, wrathful words of those who bore up the hands of great-hearted Lincoln, agonizing for his country, against those who thought this nation not worth preserving. During all the years since then, whenever the stress of trial pressed through the surface of prosperous life to the hard substratum of conviction and sense

of national duty, I have found the men whose aroused conscience and patriotism urged them to stand for the financial honor, the industrial independence, the moral integrity, the fidelity to duty of our country, seeking their object chiefly through the organized power of the Republican party. I believe in spiritual succession, in the transmission of faith from generation to generation, in the ennoblement of reverence for great examples, in the purification of life by ideals, in the love of country that subordinates lesser motives, and I believe that if the real prosperity and honor of America are to be preserved, if the soul of America is to be saved for her mission of the future, it must be through the leadership of that great organization which, in its birth and its life, its victories and its defeats, its convictions and its impulses, is and always has been national to the core.

And, with cheerful hope, I recognize as the true inheritor and interpreter of that ancient spirit which has made America what she is, the strong, true and tried American gentleman whom we are about to make the twenty-ninth president of the United States—Charles Evans Hughes.

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